

# Good Plan Making Guide

Plan Making Principles for Practitioners

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# Overview

- 0.1 The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) has been helping local authorities with their plan-making, sometimes working in partnership with the Planning Inspectorate. Based on this experience, this PAS Good Plan Making Guide identifies key principles for successful plan making and highlights some of the core tasks that will need to be undertaken to develop your local plan. The principles are:

**Principle 1: Define a locally relevant spatial vision and objectives for the area**

**Principle 2: Start with a clear understanding of what your local plan must cover to address the critical issues in your area**

**Principle 3: Develop a realistic project plan for preparing the local plan**

**Principle 4: Integrate the sustainability appraisal with each stage of the plan making process**

**Principle 5: Develop and implement an effective engagement strategy for the preparation of the plan**

**Principle 6: Develop a relevant and robust evidence base for housing and other topics**

**Principle 7: Ensure you identify strategic issues and address any cross-boundary impacts. This will help you demonstrate how you have met the duty to cooperate**

**Principle 8: Create and refine realistic spatial policy options**

**Principle 9: Develop a usable and focused set of plan policies**

**Principle 10: Ensure the local plan is deliverable, viable and supported by necessary infrastructure**

- 0.2 The Guide has been divided up into 10 sections dealing with each of the principles in turn. But in practice the tasks associated with each principle will often be undertaken in parallel and iteratively as illustrated in the diagram below.
- 0.3 These 10 principles are reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF also identifies the tests used by the Planning Inspectorate, to examine whether a local plan can be considered sound. The 'soundness' test for plans are that the local plan must be:
- positively prepared (i.e. having regard to objectively assessed needs)
  - consistent with national policy (i.e. interpreting the NPPF at the local level)
  - justified (i.e. through the exploration of alternatives) and
  - effective (i.e. deliverable).
- 0.4 PAS has also developed a 'Soundness Self Assessment Checklist'. This checklist complements this Guide and is a tool to ensure you have followed procedures and produced relevant local plan documents.

## Principles of Good Plan Making

